

## **GUITAR MIKEY TIMELINE**

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### **1969**

At the age of 5 receives a stack of 45 rpm records. By the age of 6 he finds himself recording himself singing along the records on his dad's cassette recorder. Songs included "Kansas City" by Trini Lopez.

### **1976**

First Television Appearances At Age 11

Mike McMillan AKA Guitar Mikey at age 11 starts The Young Canadian Blues Band. He makes several appearances with the 3 member band on a local cable show performing some 50's rock'n'roll classics as well as Johnny Winter's "Mean Town Blues".

At age 11 Mike attends a **Muddy Waters** concert by himself. His father returns at the end of the show to pick him up. He is nowhere to be found. Eventually as Mike's dad continues to circle the auditorium he finds Mike exiting the stage door where he had been hanging out with the man himself, Muddy Waters.

First Working Band

Mike had just turned 12 when he joined his first working band "Phoenix". They would play local high school dances. He would continue performing as a guitar player playing in rock bands while all the time really wanting to play blues.

### **1980**

Steel City Blues Band

Mike realized that if he was going to play blues, he would have to front a band as the singer. So he began to sing blues imitating his childhood idol Johnny Winter. The familiar growling style would work for the time being. However Mike's singing would eventually grow into something all his own. He started The Steel City Blues Band.

Steel City Blues Band - 1st Place

The Steel City Blues Band entered a band competition. It was in the form of a UNICEF telethon. Over fifty bands competed from all over southern Ontario. The Steel City Blues Band would win 1st place. This was the moment that began Mike's first phase of his career professionally. The band would begin playing clubs and become a favorite at area music festivals.

### **1983**

Biscuit & Steel

The Steel City Blues Band continues club dates but now something has changed. They have a feature performer join the band. Richard Newell AKA **King Biscuit Boy** joins The Steel City Blues Band as a featured artist. This would begin a musical relationship that would continue on and off over the years to follow.

### **1984**

Steel to Biscuit

Richard Newell AKA King Biscuit Boy has a new album coming out, "Mouth of Steel". The Steel City Blues Band is now the King Biscuit Boy band. They tour to promote Rich's new album.

Mike Back On His Own

Shortly after "Mouth of Steel" mouth of steel tour, Mike decides to be back on his own. Mike begins a couple of projects trying to find himself. He has a couple of bands "Soul Survivor", named after the James Cotton tune and "The Electric Groove". During this time he gets a new name. For some time Mikey had been performing the Johnny "Guitar" Watson classic "Gangster of Love". In the song there is a line "Sheriff says Is you Guitar Watson....". Mikey changed to "Guitar Mikey" simply to make it fit in the song. It was beginning to stick. **Guitar Mikey** is born.

## 1985

Guitar Mikey & The Real Thing

Mike begins playing around southern Ontario as Guitar Mikey and start his new band The Real Thing. It's a winner. Things pick up.

**Ronnie Hawkins** takes a strong interest in recruiting Mikey into **The Hawks**. Mikey decides not to put his career in hold realizing he is passing up a huge opportunity.

## 1988

Guitar Mikey & The Real Thing [Chesterfield] (self titled first release)

The Real Things first self titled debut doesn't do much for them in sales but opens up many opportunities. More dates are offered and with acts like **Matt Murphy**, **Paul Butterfield**, and **Johnny Winter** to name a few. Later Mikey also gets an opportunity to perform with one of his mentors, **Buddy Guy** at the opening weekend of his club legions.



## 1990

Caught Between The Squeeze [Spy/AM]

The Real Thing is signed to a 7 year record contract with Spy/AM. They release their first major album "Caught Between The Squeeze".



## 1993

Mikey Leaves Spy/AM

Mikey frustrated with the way his career is being handled by both management and record company, breaks all ties. The next few years would include some of the best performances and one the hottest line-ups The Real Thing ever had, Peter Nunn, Dino Verginella and Mike Eyers.

## 1997

Goin' To Chicago - Can't Take You

Guitar Mikey Moves to Chicago. At the end of 1997 Guitar Mikey made Chicago his long awaited home. *"I have felt Chicago to be my surrogate home for 10 years. Now it is my home. I remember in 1988, I was sitting in Blues Etc. and the Kinsey Report were playing. I explained to one of the Kinsey brothers that I was visiting from Canada, had been playing blues since I was 10 and would like to sit in. His response was 'Welcome home man'. Well, he never got me up to play that night but what he had said stuck, and he was right".* Mikey folded his Canadian band and now has formed a Chicago based band. While putting together his new line-up Mikey has been seen playing in various Chicago clubs like **The Kingston Mines**, **Buddy Guy's Legends**, **The Checkerboard** and **Blues Etc.** and playing with people like **Charlie Love**, **Nellie "Tiger" Travis**, **Billy Branch**, **Carl Weathersby**, **Phil Guy** and **Kenny Neal**. He also made a special appearance at the **House of Blues** as a guest member of the **Shirley King Band** (daughter of B.B.).

## 2000

Goin' To New England?

Guitar Mikey Moves to New England.

*"It is peaceful here in my new home. I love to ski and I love the ocean."* After 4 year living in Chicago, Mikey moves to New England to pursue new opportunities. He now has a small recording studio in house in the country (or so it seems). He continues to write and record.

## 2003

Blues For Vets

Guitar Mikey gets actively involved in supporting veterans with the **Blues For Vets** annual event.

Visit To The Delta

Guitar Mikey and Keyboardist Mark Yacovonne tour the Memphis, TN and Clarksdale, MS area to soak up the music, history and BBQ and do a little playing. They are accompanied by Mikey's wife Pamela and Mark's girlfriend Bethany and all four are taken in by the friendly south, and in particular Clarksdale itself. This trip plants the seed of possible relocation.

## 2006

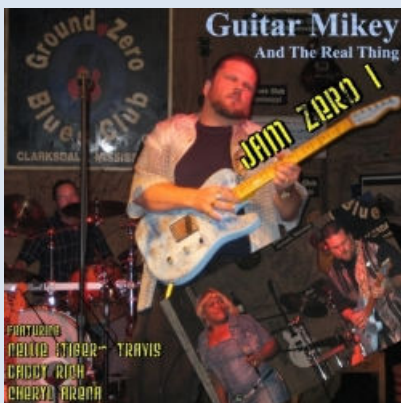
The Mississippi Delta - Final Designation

Finally after three years of talking about it, Mikey and wife Pamela take the plunge. They are eager to say goodbye to Boston and move to Clarksdale, MS. Ironically, the music and history that Mikey grows up only reading about as a kid, is not the thing that brings him and his wife to Clarksdale, but purely the people - and a new way of life.

## 2008

Jam Zero I [61 Records]

Jam Zero I, the first album in 17 year for Guitar Mikey. It is a archive of live jams that took place in the course of the first year of Mikey's regular appearances at the would famous Ground Zero Blues Club. It is the first in an intended series.



## 2012

Out Of The Box [Earwig]

Guitar Mikey releases his first studio album in over 20 years with Chicago Blues Label Earwig Music. He has a great supporting cast including world renown harmonica player Billy Gibson, Bob Margolin (Muddy Waters) on guitar, David Maxwell on keyboards, Peter Nunn (Gowan, The Jitters, Honeymoon Suite) on keyboards, Marty Richards (Joe Perry Project, J Geils) on drums, Nellie "Tiger" Travis on vocals and some great Clarkdale area folks including Terry "Big T" Williams on Bass, Lee Williams on drums, Alphonso Sanders on sax and Super Chikan on Guitar. The album has done well and been on the Roots Report since May, 2012, reaching #1 Canadian Roots and #12 USA Blues in August, 2012.

